

REMARKS

Applicant respectfully requests that the above application be reconsidered, as amended. Claims 14-15 and 17-23 are currently pending.

Applicant acknowledges the statement at page 2 of the Office Action that Claims 1-9 and 13 have been withdrawn from further consideration as being drawn to a non-elected group. Accordingly, and without disclaimer or prejudice, Claims 1-9 and 13 have been cancelled with Applicant reserving the right to pursue these cancelled Claims in a subsequent divisional application.

At page 2 of the Office Action, Claims 15 and 16 have been objected to because of certain informalities. Responsive to these objections, and as suggested in the Office Action, Claim 15 has been amended and Claim 16 has been rewritten as new independent Claim 17, without disclaimer or prejudice, to correct the indicated informalities.

Claims 14 and 15 have been amended to recite that the perforated cage is caused to be moved to a sequence of positions within the fluidized bed in the tank. Support for this amendment can be found in paragraph [0036] at page 6 of the above application.

New Claim 18 has been added which defines the perforated cage as a rotating auger. Support for this amendment can be found in paragraph [0036] at page 6 of the above application.

New Claim 19 has been added which defines the fluidized bed as having a zone that the perforated cage is prohibited from entering, along with new Claim 20 that defines this zone as having a mold-pattern therein. Support for new Claims 19-20 can be found in paragraph [0038] at page 6 of the above application.

New Claims 21-23 have been added which define the perforated cage as being caused to move, respectively: (1) within parts of the fluidized bed more than once; (2) in a raster-type path; and (3) in a tightening spiral path into the center thereof and then in a spiral out path. Support for new Claims 21-23 can be found in paragraph [0037] at page 6 of the above application.

A. Response to Rejection of Claim 15 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, Second Paragraph, for Indefiniteness

At page 2 of the Office Action, Claim 15 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. This rejection relates to the antecedent basis for the phrase “the stroller” in line 2.

Responsive to this rejection, Claim 15 has been amended, without disclaimer or prejudice, to correct this typographical error (i.e., by changing “stroller” to “controller”), and thus overcome this rejection.

B. Response to Rejection of Claims 14-15 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as Anticipated by Bickford et al

At pages 3-4 of the Office Action, Claims 14-15 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by U.S Patent 4,779,169 (Bickford et al).

Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection. Responsive to this rejection, Claims 14-15 have been amended to recite that the perforated cage is caused to move to a sequence of positions within the fluidized bed in the tank. By contrast, basket 30 of Bickford et al is moved by swivel connection 29 from one fluidized bed enclosure 12 to another fluidized bed enclosure 14, and vice versa. See FIG. 1 and col. 4, lines 6-27. Bickford et al in no way teaches or suggests causing a perforated cage to move to a sequence of positions within a fluidized bed in a tank according to Claims 14-15.

Bickford et al would also not teach or suggest: new Claim 18 wherein the perforated cage is a rotating auger; new Claim 19 wherein the fluidized bed has a zone (that can have a mold-pattern therein according to new Claim 20) that the perforated cage is prohibited from entering; or new Claims 21-23 which define the perforated cage as being caused to move, respectively: (1) within parts of the fluidized bed more than once; (2) in a raster-type path; or (3) in a tightening spiral path into the center of the fluidized bed and then in a spiral out path.

For the foregoing reasons, Claims 14-15, as amended, as well as new Claims 18-23, are novel and unobvious over Bickford et al.

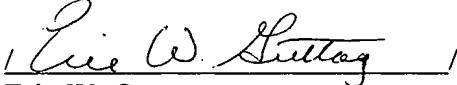
C. Response to Objection to Claim 16

At page 4 of the Office Action, the Examiner has objected to Claim 16 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but says it would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Responsive to this objection, Claim 16 has been rewritten as new independent Claim 17 to overcome this objection.

D. Conclusion

In conclusion, the rejection of Claim 15, as amended, complies with the requirements of 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph. Claims 14-15 and 17-23, as amended, are novel and unobvious over the prior art relied on in the Office Action. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that Claims 14-15 and 17-23, as amended, be allowed to issue in the above application.

Respectfully submitted,
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